

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8741

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, AR

SUBJ: FEAR FOR SAFETY OF SCHOOL CHILDREN SWEEPS BUENOS AIRES

1. IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS THREE YOUNG SCHOOLGIRLS IN GREATER BUENOS AIRES WERE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED AND MURDERED. IN ADDITION THERE WAS A NEAR FATAL ATTACK ON A FOURTH. A MAN WHO HAS ALLEGEDLY ADMITTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACTS HAS BEEN ARRESTED. WHILE NOT NORMALLY OF POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE, THIS SERIES OF EVENTS CREATED AN ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION AND WHEN FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER OF ANONYMOUS CALLS THREATENING SCHOOL-CHILDREN, NEAR PANIC RESULTED IN SOME SCHOOLS. ALL SCHOOLS ARE TAKING SECURITY PRECAUTIONS, THE POLICE HAVE ISSUED A STATEMENT GUARANTEEING THE WELL BEING OF THE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AND EDUCATION MINISTER IVANESSEVICH HAS DENOUNCED THE THREATENING CALLS AS PART OF A PLAN TO CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR THE GOVERNMENT. IN ANNOUNCING THE NOV 6 IMPOSITION OF STATE OF SIEGE, THE GOA MENTIONED THESE THREATS AS ONE OF THE REASONS. (SEE SEPTTEL).

2. ONE REPORT HAS IT THAT THE MONTONEROS AND ERP JOINTLY ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE SAYING A TEACHER AND FIVE CHILDREN WOULD BE KILLED EACH DAY UNTIL MRS. PERON RESIGNED. OTHER REPORTS

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INDICATE THAT THE CHILDREN OF ONE OR MORE MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE

BEEN THREATENED BY SAME.

3. COMMENT: JUST WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE THREATS IS NOT YET KNOWN. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT LEFTIST TERRORISTS-- IF THEY ARE INDEED THE AUTHOR OF THE THREATS--WOULD DELIBERATELY KILL CHILDREN, SINCE THE COST IN POPULAR SUPPORT WOULD BE ENORMOUS. HOWEVER, THEIR PURPOSE MAY BE TO SOW PANIC AND DISRUPT THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SIMPLY BY MAKING THREATS. IF THIS IS THIER AIM, THEY ARE HAVING SOME SUCCESS. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS THAT THE THREATS COME FROM PERSONS WHO DISAGREE WITH THE POLICIES OF IVANESSEVICH (WHO HAS BEEN RECENTLY ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTING TO INDOCTRINATE SCHOOLCHILDREN WITH PERONIST PROGAGANDA). NOR CAN IT BE DISCOUNTED THAT THE CALLS MIGHT REPRESENT AN AUTO-PROVOCATION ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENT INTELLIGENCE SERVICES WITH A VIEW TO GENERATING A POPULAR CLIMATE IN FAVOR OF THE STATE OF SIEGE.

4. WHATEVER THE MOTIVATION FOR THE THREATS, THEY HAVE HAD THE EFFECT OF CAUSING A WAVE OF NEAR MASS HYSTERIA AMONG PARENTS. SOME SCHOOLS HAVE CLOSED AND SOME PARENTS ARE GUARDING THEIR CHILDRENS SCHOOLS WITH ARMS IN HAND.

HILL

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